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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8391
INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS PRIORITY
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY 2191
RUCNTXD/AMEMBASSY MAJURO PRIORITY 0038
RUEHPB/AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY PRIORITY 3728
RUEHSV/AMEMBASSY SUVA PRIORITY 0134
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 1684
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 2434
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RHHJJPI/USPACOM HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 JAKARTA 000561

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DEPT FOR EAP, EAP/MTS, EAP/MLS, EAP/ANP, DRL/AWH
NSC FOR E.PHU

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/18/2018
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINS](#) [KDEM](#) [ID](#)
SUBJECT: PAPUA -- TWO STEPS FORWARD, ONE STEP BACK

REF: A. JAKARTA 521
[1](#)B. JAKARTA 478

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Classified By: Pol/C Joseph Legend Novak, reasons 1.4 (b+d).

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: An Indonesian military tribunal has sentenced four soldiers to jail for rape and desertion in Biak, Papua. The GOI also continues to investigate an incident where soldiers allegedly shot and killed a Papuan civilian. In a separate development, authorities plan to charge two Papuans with subversion in connection with the raising of the banned "Morning Star" flag, which the GOI considers a symbol of separatism. The sentencing of the soldiers to prison is positive for accountability. We have queried the GOI regarding the "Morning Star" incident. END SUMMARY.

SWIFT MILITARY JUSTICE

[1](#)2. (U) A military tribunal in Jayapura has sentenced four members of the Indonesian Armed Forces (TNI) to prison for rape and desertion. The tribunal sentenced First Pvt. Albertus Mansi to 2.5 years in prison while it handed Chief Sgt Piter Misiro a ten-month sentence. Two other soldiers, First Pvt. Yordan Arney and Second Sgt. Bachrizal Ilmi received lesser sentences of three and six months, respectively. Tribunal chief Lt. Col P. Simorangkir also announced that the four would forfeit their salaries while in custody and be dismissed from the TNI upon their release. The soldiers had been stationed at the 173 Military District in Biak, an island off northern Papua.

AN ONGOING INVESTIGATION

[1](#)3. (U) Separately, Indonesian military officials continue to investigate two soldiers in connection with the January 31, 2008, fatal shooting of Omanggen Wonda in Tingginambut, in the central highlands of Papua. The shooting occurred when a patrol from the 756 Infantry Battalion, based in Puncak Jaya District, Papua, was searching a village for a group of armed men reportedly at large in the area. Details of the incident remain sketchy and human rights groups dispute some elements of the military's account, including whether the patrol fired warning shots.

¶4. (U) Military officials are investigating the commander of the patrol, Second Lieutenant Sumaryono, and another soldier whose name has not been released. Both men remain in military custody while the investigation continues. The commander of Jayapura-based XVII/Cendrawasih Military Area (KODAM), responsible for military operations in Papua, Major General Haryadi Soetanto publicly promised that the military would conduct a thorough investigation and that any offending soldiers would be punished.

¶5. (C) Military officials are investigating as many as 20 other incidents of alleged misconduct by military personnel in Papua and West Papua provinces, according to Berty Fernandez, an advisor to Papua Governor Barnabas Suebu. Fernandez told poloff on March 17 that in the past the provincial government had difficulty getting information out of the TNI re investigations of alleged military misconduct. The situation had improved significantly in recent months, Fernandez related, with the military becoming much more helpful.

SQUABBLE OVER THE MORNING STAR

¶6. (U) In a separate development, authorities plan to charge two Papuans with subversion in connection with several rallies during which Papuan activists raised the "Morning Star" flag, which the GOI considers a separatist symbol. Police initially detained 13 Papuans and subsequently announced they would charge two with subversion in Manokwari, the capital of West Papua province. The other 11 individuals have been released. The subversion charge carries a maximum possible sentence of 20 years.

¶7. (U) In addition to raising the Morning Star flag, the protesters called for a UN-monitored referendum on the legal

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status of Papua and West Papua provinces (a demand that is anathema to the GOI and Indonesian nationalists). The protesters, who are affiliated with pro-independence student groups, have staged a number of protests and plan more in the coming weeks (ref A).

¶8. (C) Poloff raised the matter with Dicky Komar, Deputy Director for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs at the Department of Foreign Affairs (DEPLU), on March 18. Poloff stressed that the USG was very concerned about freedom of expression around the world. Indonesia, as a democracy, has a special obligation to allow its citizens the opportunity to express their views peacefully, even on politically sensitive matters. Komar said he was unaware of the events in Manokwari, but promised to look into the matter.

POSITIVE FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

¶9. (C) The sentencing of the soldiers to prison is positive for accountability. The Indonesian military is also proceeding in the right direction regarding the case of the shooting in the highlands. It is unfortunate that the GOI overreacts whenever the Morning Star flag is raised and, by doing so, plays into the hands of radical separatist elements in Papua. That type of overreaction has also taken place recently in terms of the GOI's ban on a book and its trial of a human rights activist (ref B). Both incidents have apparent separatist overtones, but did not in any way involve violence.

HUME